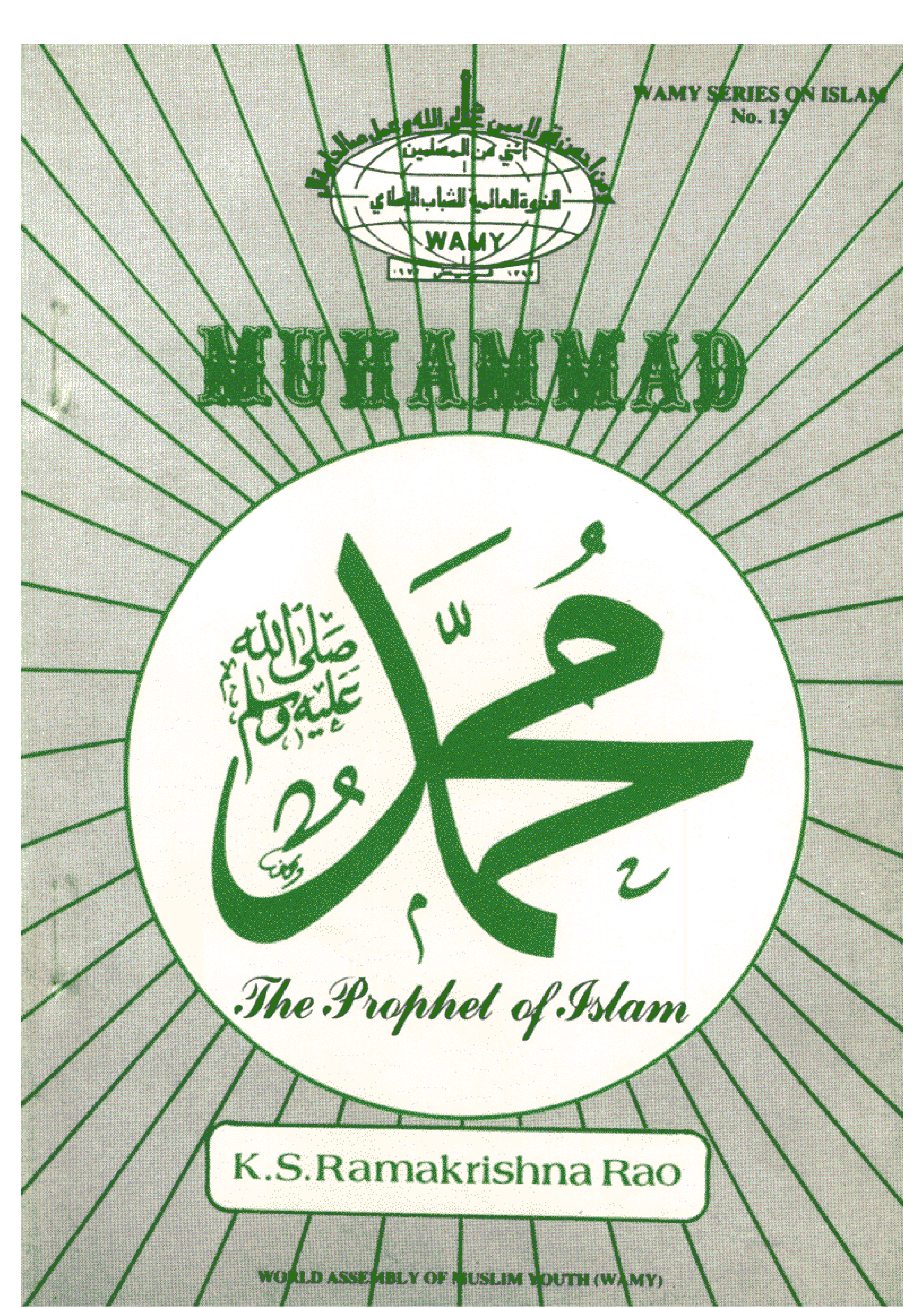

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No. 13
إنني من المسلمين
الندوة العالمية للشباب الإسلامي
WAMY
MUHAMMAD
محمد
صلى الله عليه وسلم
The Prophet of Islam
K.S.Ramakrishna Rao
WORLD ASSEMBLY OF MUSLIM YOUTH (WAMY)

MUHAMMAD, THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

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In the name of Allah, the Beneficient, the Merciful.

FOREWORD

The life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has remained a source of inspiration for people of different races, colours and origins belonging to various layers of society. It has also led scores of persons to make a deeper study of his message and even fashion their own lives on his pattern. There were others who could not go to that extent for various reasons, but at the same time, could not resist the tremendous appeal of his spotless character and the irrefutable wisdom of his message.

Prof. S. K. Ramakrishna Rao, a renowned scholar of philosophy, belongs to this latter group of thinkers who has made a thorough study of the life and the message of the Prophet and then decided to speak out the impressions he had gathered from this study.

These impressions were published in India in the form of a booklet entitled **Muhammad – The Prophet of Islam**. The same booklet was later reproduced several times both in India and abroad and won a wide acclaim.

World Assembly of Muslim Youth is pleased to publish this valuable tract in the present style under its " Series on Islam " for distribution among seekers of authentic information about Islam. We also propose to publish its translations in several other languages through trusted agencies in different countries.

We thank the learned author for his generosity to grant us the rights to publish the book and pray to God Almighty to suitably reward him for his noble gesture.

DR. MANEH AL-JOHANI
Secretary General
World Assembly of Muslim Yourth (WAMY)
April 5, 1989. Riyadh.

MUHAMMAD, THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

CHAPTER ONE

THE BEGINNINGS

In the desert of Arabia was Muhammed born, according to Muslim historians, on April 20, 571. The name means "highly praised". **He is to me the greatest mind among all the sons of Arabia.** He means so much more than all the poets and kings that preceded and succeeded him in that impenetrable desert of red sand.

When he appeared, Arabia was a desert — a nothing. Out of nothing of the desert a new world was fashioned by the mighty spirit of Muhammed — a new life, a new culture, a new civilisation, a new kingdom which extended from Morocco to Indies and influenced the thought and life of three continents — Asia, Africa and Europe.

NEED FOR UNDERSTANDING

When I thought of writing on Muhammed the Prophet, I was a bit hesitant because it was to write about a religion one does not profess[1] and it is a delicate matter to do so, for

1. The author is a professing Hindu.

there are many persons professing various religions and belonging to diverse schools of thoughts and denominations even in the same religion. Though it is sometimes claimed that a religion is entirely personal, yet it cannot be gainsaid that is has a tendency to envelope the whole universe seen as well as unseen. It somehow permeates, sometime or other, our hearts, our souls, our minds, their conscious parts, subconscious parts, unconscious or whatever part they contain or are supposed to contain. The problem assumes overwhelming importance when there is a deep conviction that our past, present and future all hang by the soft, delicate, tender-silked cord. If we further happen to be highly sensitive, the centre of gravity is very likely to be always in a state of extreme tension. Looked at from this point of view, the less said about other's religion the better. Let our religions be deeply hidden and embedded in the recesses of our innermost hearts fortified by unbroken seals of our lips.

MAN IS GREGARIOUS

But there is another aspect of this problem. Man lives in society. Our lives are bound with the lives of so many, willing or unwillingly, directly or indirectly. We eat the food grown in the same soil, drink the water from the same spring, breathe the air of the same atmosphere. Even while staunchly holding our own views, it would be helpful, if for no other purpose, at least to promote proper adjustment to our surroundings, if we also know to some extent, how the mind of our neighbour moves and what are the mainsprings of his actions. From this angle of vision, it is highly desirable that one should try to know all religions of the world, in the proper spirit, to promote mutual understand-

ing and better appreciation of our neighbourhood, immediate and remote.

Further, our thoughts are not scatered as they appear to be on the surface. They have got themselves crystallised around a few nuclei in the form of great world religions and living faiths that guide and motivate the lives of millions that inhabit this earth of ours. It is our duty, in one sense, if we have the ideal of ever becoming citizens of the world before us, to make a little attempt to know the great religions and systems of philosophy that have ruled mankind.

THE PROPHET — A HISTORIC PERSONALITY

In spite of these preliminary remarks, the ground in the field of religion, where there is often a conflict between intellect and emotion, is so slippery that one is constantly reminded of fools that rush in where angels fear to tread. It is also so complex from another point of view. The subject of my writing is about the tenets of a religion, which is historic, and its Prophet, who is also a historic personality. Even a hostile critic like *Sir Willian Muir* speaking about the Holy Qur'an says that, **"There is probably in the world no other book which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text".**[1] I may also add, Prophet Muhammed is also a historic personality,[2] every event of whose life has been most carefully recorded and even the minutest details preserved intact for posterity. His life and works are not wrapt in mystery. One need not hunt for the accurate information and embark on arduous expeditions to sift the chaff and husk from the grain of truth.

1. Now 14 centurties.

2. "Most historical of all religious personalities". *Encyclopaedia Britannica.*

PAST MISREPRESENTATION

My work is further lightened because those days are fast disappearing when Islam was highly misrepresented by some of its critics,[1] for reasons political and otherwise. *Prof. Bevan* writes in Cambridge Mediaeval History, **"The accounts of Muhammed and Islam which were published in Europe before the beginning of the 19th century are now to be regarded as literary curiosities"**. My problem to write this monograph is easier because we are not generally fed now on this kind of history and much time need not be spent on pointing out our misrepresentations of Islam.

The theory of Islam and Sword for instance is not heard now frequently in any quarter worth the name. The Principle of Islam that there is no compulsion in religion is well-known. *Gibbon,* a historian of world-wide fame, says, **"A pernicious tenet has been imputed to the Muhammedans,[2] the duty of extirpating all the religions by the sword"**. This charge of ignorance and bigotry, says the eminent historian, is refuted by Qur'an, by the history of Musalman conquerers and by their public and legal toleration of Christian worship. The greatest success of Muhammed's life was affected by sheer moral force without the stroke of a sword.

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1. "The lies which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Muhammed) are disgraceful to ourselves only". *Thomas Carlyle*

2. The author means Muslims. **"Muhammedans"** might imply "worshippers of the Holy Prophet Muhummed (p.b.u.h.)"; but no Muslim ever worships the Holy Prophet as God.

CHAPTER TWO

Mustafā THE CHOSEN ONE

"WHO SUBDUE THEIR ANGER"

(Holy Qur'an 3:134)

To the Arabs who would fight for forty years on the slight provocation that a camel belonging to the quest of one tribe had strayed into the grazing land belonging to another and both sides had fought till they lost 70,000 lives in all, threatening the extinction of both tribes. To such furious Arabs, the Prophet of Islam taught self-control and discipline to the extent of praying even on the battlefield.

WAR FOR SELF-DEFENCE

When, after repeated efforts at conciliation had utterly failed, circumstnaces arose that dragged him into the battlefield purely in self-defence, the Prophet of Islam changed the whole strategy of the battlefield. The total number of casualties in all the wars that took place during his lifetime, when the whole Arabian Peninsula came under his banner, does not exceed a few hundreds in all. He taught the Arab barbarians to pray, to pray not individually but in congregations, to God Almighty even amidst the dust and storm of warfare. Whenever the time for prayer came — and it comes five times every day — the congregational prayer had not to be abandoned or even postponed. A party had to be engaged in bowing their heads before God while another was engaged with the enemy. After finishing the prayers, the two parties had to exchange their positions.

BATTLEFIELD HUMANISED

In an age of barbarism, the battlefield itself was humanised and strict instructions were issued not to embezzle, not to cheat, not to break trust, not to mutilate, not to kill a minor child or a woman or an old man, not to hew down date palm nor burn it, not to cut down a fruit tree, not to molest monks and persons engaged in worship. His own treatment of his bitterest enemies was the noblest example for his followers. At the conquest of Mecca, he stood at the zenith of his power. The city which had tortured him and his followers, which had driven him and his people into exile and which had unrelentingly persecuted and boycotted him even when he had taken refuge in a place more than 200 miles away, that city now lay at his feet. By the laws of war he could have justly avenged all the cruelties inflicted on him and his people. But what treatment did he meet out to them? Muhammed's heart overflowed with the milk of love and kindness as he declared, **"This day, there is no reproof against you and you are all free."**

BITTEREST ENEMIES PARDONED

This was one of the chief objects why he permitted war in self-defence — to unite human beings. And when this object was achieved, even his worst enemies were pardoned. Even those who had killed his beloved uncle, HUMZA, mutilated his dead body, had ripped it open and chewed a piece of his liver.

THEORY MERGED WITH PRACTICE

The principle of universal brotherhood and the doctrine of the equality of mankind which he proclaimed represent very great contribution of Muhammed to the social uplift of humanity. All great religions have also preached the

same doctrine, but **The Prophet of Islam had put this theory into actual practice** and its value will be fully recognised, perhaps, sometime hence, when international consciousness being awakened, racial prejudices would disappear and a stronger concept of the brotherhood of humanity comes into existence.

PEASANT AND KING EQUAL BEFORE GOD

Sarojini Naidu, speaking about this aspect of Islam, says, **"It was the first religion that preached and practised democracy; for, in the mosque, when the AZAAN** (the Muslim call to prayer) **is sounded and the worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and king kneel side by side and proclaim, 'God alone is great'."** The great poetess of India continues, **"I have been struck over and again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes man instinctively a brother. When you meet an Egyptian, an Algerian, an Indian and a Turk in London, what matters is that Egypt is the motherland of one and India is the motherland of another."**

ISLAM — CIVILISED SPAIN AND IS ANSWER TO TODAY'S SOCIAL DILEMMA

Mahatma Gandhi, in his inimitable style, says, **"Someone has said that Europeans in South Africa dread the advent of Islam — Islam, that civilized Spain; Islam, that took the torch of light to Morocco and preached to the world the Gospel of Brotherhood. The Europeans of South Africa dread the advent of Islam, as they claim equality with the white races. They may well dread it. If Brotherhood is a sin, if it is equality of the coloured races that they dread, then their dread is well-founded."**

PILGRIMAGE — HAJ — A LIVING TESTIMONY

Every year, during the pilgrimage season, the world witnesses the wonderful spectacle of this international Exhibition of Islam in levelling all distinctions of race, colour and rank. Not only the Europeans, the Africans, the Persians, the Indians, the Chinese, all meet together in Mecca as members of one divine family, but they are all clad in one dress, every person in two simple pieces of white seamless cloth, one piece round the loin and the other piece over the shoulders, bare-headed, without pomp or ceremony, repeating, **"Here am I, O God; at Thy command; Thou art One and the Only; Here am I."** Thus there remains nothing to differentiate the high from the low and every pilgrim carries home the impression of the international significance of Islam.

In the words of *Prof. Hurgronje,* "**The League of Nations founded by the Prophet of Islam put the principle of international unity and human brotherhood on such universal foundations as to show candle to other nations**". He continues: **"the fact is that no nation of the world can show a parallel to what Islam has done towards the realisation of the idea of League of Nations."**

ISLAM — A BEACON TO A DRIFTING WORLD

The Prophet of Islam brought the reign of democracy in its best form. Caliph Umar, Caliph Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, Caliph Mansur, Abbas, the son of the Caliph Mamun, and many other caliphs and kings had to appear before the judge as ordinary men in Islamic courts. Even today we all know how the black Negroes are treated by the civilized white races. Consider the state of Bilal, a Negro slave in the days of the Prophet of Islam nearly 14 centuries ago. The office of calling Muslims to prayer was considered

to be a position of honour in the early days of Islam and it was offered to this Negro slave. After the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet ordered him to call for prayer and the Negro slave, with his black colour and his thick lips, stood over the roof of the holy KAABA, the most historic and the holiest place in the Islamic world, when some proud Arabs painfully cried aloud, **"Oh, this Black Negro slave, woe to him. He stands on the roof of holy KAABA to call for prayer."**

As if to answer this outburst smacking of pride and prejudice, both of which the Prophet of Islam aimed at eliminating, he delivered a sermon in which he said:

> **"ALLAH IS TO BE PRAISED AND THANKED FOR RIDDING US OF THE VICES AND PRIDE OF THE DAYS OF IGNORANCE. O PEOPLE! NOTE THAT ALL MEN ARE DIVIDED IN TWO CATEGORIES ONLY: THE PIOUS AND GOD-FEARING WHO ARE ESTEEMABLE IN ALLAH'S RECKONING, AND THE TRANSGRESSORS AND HARD-HEARTED, WHO ARE LOWLY AND CONTEMPTIBLE IN THE EYE OF ALLAH, OTHERWISE ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE THE PROGENY OF ADAM AND ALLAH HAS CREATED ADAM OF CLAY"**

This was later approved and confirmed by Qur'an in the following words:

"O MANKIND! MOST CERTAINLY, IT IS WE
(GOD ALMIGHTY)
WHO HAVE CREATED YOU ALL
FROM A SINGLE (PAIR)
OF A MALE AND A FEMALE,

AND IT IS WE WHO HAVE MADE YOU INTO NATIONS AND TRIBES,

THAT YE MAY RECOGNISE EACH OTHER (NOT THAT YE MAY DISPISE EACH OTHER)

VERILY, THE NOBLEST OF YOU

IN THE SIGHT OF ALLAH IS (HE WHO IS) THE MOST RIGHTEOUS OF YOU.

(HOLY QUR'AN 49:13)

TRANSFORMATION EXTRAORDINARIA

The Prophet of Islam thus brought about such a mighty transformation that the noblest and purest among Arabs by birth offered their daughters in marriage to this Negro slave and whenever the second Caliph of Islam, known to history as UMAR the Great, the commander of the faithful, saw this Negro slave, he immediately stood in reverence and welcomed him by exclaiming, **"Here comes our master, here comes our lord"**. What a tremendous change was brought by Qur'an and Prophet Muhammed in the Arabs, the proudest people at that time on earth. This is the reason why *Goethe,* the greatest of German poets, speaking about the Holy Qur'an, declared that, **"This book will go on exercising through all ages a most potent influence"**. This is also the reason why *George Bernard Shaw* says, **"If any religion has a chance of ruling over England, nay, Europe, within the next 100 years, it is Islam."**

ISLAM—EMANCIPATED WOMEN

It is this same democratic spirit of Islam that has emancipated women from the bondage of man. *Sir Charles Edward Archibald Hamilton* says, **"Islam teaches the inhe-**

rent sinlessness of man. It teaches that man and woman have come from the same essence, possess the same soul and have been equipped with equal capabalities for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments."

WOMEN HAD RIGHT TO OWN PROPERTY

The Arabs had a very strong tradition that he alone can inherit who can smite with the spear and can wield the sword. But Islam came as the defender of the weaker sex and entitled women to share in the inheritance of their parents. It gave women, centuries ago, the right of owning property. Yet it was only 12 centuries later, in 1881, that England, supposed to be the cradle of democracy, adopted this institution of Islam and an Act was passed, called, **"The Married Women's Act".** But centuries earlier, the Prophet of Islam had proclaimed that **"Women are the twin halves of men. The rights of women are sacred". "See that women are maintained in the rights granted to them."**

CHAPTER THREE

Al - Ameen
THE TRUSTWORTHY

THE GOLDEN MEAN

Islam is not directly concerned with political and economic systems, but indirectly and, in so far as political and economic affairs influence man's conduct, it does lay down some very important principles of economic life. According to *Prof. Massignon,* Islam maintains the balance between exaggerated opposites and has always in view the building of character which is the basis of civilization. This is secured by its law of inheritance; by an organised, and not an optional, system of charity known as Zakat; and by regarding as illegal all anti-social practices in the economic field like monopoly, usury, securing of pre-determined unearned incomes and increments, cornering markets, hoarding and creating artifical scarcity of any commodity in order to force the price to rise. Gambling is illegal. Contributions to schools, to places of worship, hospitals, digging of wells, opening of orphanages are the highest acts of virtue. Orphanages have sprund for the first time, it is said, under the teaching of the Prophet of Islam. The world owes its orphanages to this Prophet who was himself born an orphan. **"Good all this"**, says *Carlyle* about Muhammed. **"The natural voice of humanity, of piety and equity, dwelling in the heart of this wild son of nature, speaks".**

THE TEST

A historian once said, a great man should be judged by three tests:

(1) Was he found to be of true mettle by his contemporaries?

(2) Was he great enough to rise above the standards of his age?

(3) Did he leave anything as permanent legacy to the world at large?

This list may be further extended, but all these three tests of greatness are eminently satisfied to the highest degree in the case of Prophet Muhammed. Some illustrations of the last two have already been mentioned.

The first of the three is; was the Prophet of Islam found to be of true mettle by his contemporaries?

IMPECCABLE CHARACTER

Historical records show that all contemporaries of Muhammed, both friends and foes, acknowledged the sterling qualities, the spotless honesty, the noble virtues, the absolute sincerity and the absolute trustworthiness of the apostle of Islam in all walks of life and in every sphere of human activity. Even the jews and those who did not believe in his message accepted him as arbitrator in their personal disputes on account of his scrupulous impartiality. Even those who did not believe in his message were forced to say, **"O Muhammed we do not call you a liar, but we deny Him who has given you a Book and inspired you with a Message."** They thought he was one possessed. They tried violence to cure him. But the best of them saw that a new light had dawned on him and they hastened to seek

that enlightement. It is a notable feature in the history of the Prophet of Islam that his nearest relation, his beloved cousin and his bosom friends, who knew him most intimately, were thoroughly imbued with the truth of his mission and convinced of the genuineness of his divine inspiration. **"If these men and women, noble, intelligent, and certainly not less educated than the fishermen of Galilee, had perceived the slightest sign of earthliness, deception, or want of faith in the Teacher himself, Muhammed's hopes of moral regeneration and social reform, would all have been crumbled to dust in a moment."** From **"The Spirit of Islam"**, by *Sayed Ameer Ali.*

On the contrary we find, that the devotion of his followers was such that he was voluntarily acknowledged leader of their lives. They braved for his sake, persecutions and danger; they believed, trusted, obeyed and honoured him even in the most excruciating torture and severest mental agony caused by excommunication; even unto death. Would this have been so had they noticed the slightest backsliding in their leader?

UNDYING LOVE FOR THE HOLY PROPHET

Read the history of the early converts to Islam and every heart would melt at the sight of the brutal treatment of innocent men and women. Sumayya, an innocent woman, is cruelly torn into pieces by piercing through with spears. An example is made of Yasir whose legs are tied to two camels and the beasts are driven in the opposite direction. Khabbab Bin Arth is made to lie down on a bed of burning coal with the brutal legs of the merciless tyrant on his breast so that he may not move and this makes even the fat beneath his skin melt. Khabbab Bin Adi is put to death in a cruel manner by mutilation and cutting off his flesh

piecemeal. In the midst of his tortures, when asked whether he did not wish Muhammed in his place while he was in his house with his family, the sufferer cried out that he was gladly prepared to sacrifice himself, his family and children and all to save Muhammed from the prick of a thorn. Scores of heart-rending incidents of this type may be narrated. But what do all these incidents show? Why was it that these sons and daughters of Islam not only surrendered to their Prophet, their allegiance but made a gift of their bodies, hearts and souls? Is not the intense faith and conviction on the part of the immediate followers of Muhammed, the noblest testimony to his sincerity and to his utter self-absorption in the task assigned to him?

FOLLOWERS OF BEST CALIBRE

And these men were not of low station or of an inferior mental calibre. Around him, in quite early days, gathered what was best and noblest in Mecca, its flower and cream, men of position, rank, wealth and culture, and from his own kith and kin, those who knew the ins and outs of his life. All the first four Caliphs, with their towering personalities, were converts of this early period.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica says that; **"Muhammad is the most successful of all Prophets and religious personalities"**. But this success was not the result of a mere accident. It was not a windfall. It was a recognition of the fact that he was found to be of true mettle by his contemporaries. It was the result of his admirable and all-compelling personality.

CHAPTER FOUR

As - Sadiq
THE TRUTHFUL

PERFECT MODEL FOR HUMAN LIFE

The personality of Muhammed, it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes? There is Muhammed, *the Prophet.* There is Muhammed, *the Warrior;* Muhammed, *the Businessman;* Muhammed, *the Statesman;* Muhammed, *the Orator;* Muhammed, *the Reformer;* Muhammed, *the Refuge of Orphans;* Muhammed, *the protector of Slaves;* Muhammed, *the emancipator of women;* Muhammed, *the Judge;* Muhammed, *the Saint. All in all these magnificent roles, in all these departments of human activities, he is alike a hero.*

Orphanhood is the extreme of helplessness and his life upon this earth began with it. Kingship is the height of the material power and his life ended with it. From an orphan boy, to a persecuted refugee, then to an overlord — spiritual as well as temporal — of a whole nation and arbiter of its destinies, with all its trials and temptations, with all its vicissitudes and changes, its lights and shades, its ups and downs, its terror and splendour, he has stood the fire of the world and come out unscathed to serve as a model in every phase of life. His achievements are not limited to one aspect of life, but cover the whole field of human conditions.

MUHAMMED (P.B.U.H.) THE GREATEST

If for instance, greatness consists in the purification of a

nation, steeped in barbarism and immersed in absolute moral darkness, that dynamic personality who has transformed, refined and uplifted an entire nation, sunk low as the Arabs were, and made them the torch-bearers of civilizations and learning, has every claim to that greatness. If greatness lies in unifying the discordant elements of society by the ties of brotherhood and charity, the Prophet of the desert has got every title to this distinction. If greatness consists in reforming those wrapt in a degrading superstition and pernicious practices of every kind, the Prophet of Islam has wiped out superstitions and irrational fear from the hearts of millions. If it lies in displaying high morals, Muhammed has been admitted by friends and foes as Al-Amin, and *As-Ṣadiq*, the trustworthy and truthful. If a conqueror is a great man, here is a person who rose from a helpless orphan and a humble creature to be the ruler of Arabia, the equal of Khusros and Caesars, one who founded a great empire that has survived all these 14 centuries. If the devotion that a leader commands is the criterion of greatness, the Prophet's name even today exerts a magic charm over millions of souls, spread all over the world.

THE UNLETTERED PROPHET

He had not studied philosophy in the school of Athens or Rome, Persia, India or China, yet he could proclaim the highest truths of eternal value to mankind. Unlettered himself, he could yet speak with an eloquence and fervour which moved men to tears of ecstasy. Born an orphan and blessed with no worldly goods, he was loved by all. He had studied at no military academy; yet he could organise his forces against tremendous odds and gained victories through the moral forces which he marshalled. Gifted men

with a genius for preaching are rare. Descartes included the peıfect preacher among the rarest kind in the world. **Hitler** in his '*Mein Kamp*' has expressed a similar view. He says: **"A great theorist is seldom a great leader. An agitator is far more likely to possess these qualities. He will always be a better leader. For, leadership means the ability to move masses of men . The talent to produce ideas has nothing in common with the capacity for leadership".** But, he says: **"the union of the theorist, organiser, and leader in one man is the rarest phenomenon on this earth; therein consists greatness."** In the person of the Prophet of Islam the world has seen this rarest phenomenon on the earth, walking in flesh and blood.

"A poor, hard-toiling ill-provided man; careless of what vulgar men toil for. Not a bad man, I should say; something better in him than HUNGER of any sort — or these wild Arab men, fighting and jostling three-and-twenty years at his hand, in close contact with him always would not have reverenced him so!

"They were wild men, bursting ever and anon into quarrel, into all kinds of fierce sincerity; without right worth and manhood, no man could have commanded them. They called him Prophet, you say? Why, he stood there face to face with them; bare, not enshrined in any mystery; visibly clouting his own cloak, cobbling his own shoes; fighting; counselling, ordering in the midst of them: they must have seen what kind of a man he WAS, let him be CALLED what you like! No Emperor with his tiaras was obeyed as this man in a cloak of his own clouting.

"During three-and-twenty years of rough actual trial, I find something of a veritable Hero necessary for that, of itself". *Carlyle in,* "Heroes and Hero-Worship".

And more wonderful still is what the *Reverend Bosworth Smith* remarks: **"Head of the State as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but, he was Pope without the Pope's pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a police force, without a fixed revenue. If ever a man had the right to say that he ruled by a right divine, it was Muhammed, for he had all the powers without their supports. He cared not for the dressings of power. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life."**

MUHUMMED (P.B.U.H.) — UNTAINTED AND PURE

After the fall of Mecca more than one million square miles of land lay at his feet. Lord of Arabia, he mended his own shoes and coarsed woolen garments, milked the goats, swept the hearth, kindled the fire and attended to other menial offices of the family. The entire town of Madina, where he lived, grew wealthy in the later days of his life. Everywhere there was gold and silver in plenty and yet in those days of prosperity many weeks would elapse without a fire being kindled in the hearth of the king of Arabia, his food being dates and water. His family would go hungry many nights successively because they could not get anything to eat in the evening. He slept on no soft bed but on a palm mat after a long busy day, to spend most of his night in prayer, often bursting with tears before his Creator to grant him strength to discharge his duties. As the reports go, his voice would get choked due to weeping and it would appear as if a cooking pot was on fire and boiling had commenced. On the day of his death his only assets were a few coins, a part of which went to satisfy a debt and the rest was given to a needy person who came to his house for charity. The clothes in which he breathed his last had many patches. The house from where light had spread to the

world was in darkness because there was no oil in the lamp.

CONSISTENT UNTO DEATH

Circumstances changed, but the Prophet of God did not. In victory or in defeat, in power or in adversity, in affluence or in indigence, he was the same man, disclosed the same character. Like all the ways and laws of God, Prophets of God are unchangeable.

Muhummed The Greatest

"If greatness of purpose,
smallness of means,
and astounding results,

are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammed?

The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man Muhammed moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls.

On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race...

The idea of the unity of God, proclaimed amidst the exhaustion of fabulous theologies, was in itself such a miracle that upon its utterance from his lips it destroyed all the ancient superstitions...

His endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death: all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was twofold, **the unity of God and the immateriality of God;** the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not...

..."PHILOSOPHER, ORATOR, APOSTLE, LEGISLATOR, WARRIOR, CONQUEROR OF IDEAS, RESTORER OF RATIONAL BELIEFS, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammed. **AS REGARDS ALL STANDARDS BY WHICH HUMAN GREATNESS MAY BE MEASURED, WE MAY WELL ASK, IS THERE ANY MAN GREATER THAN HE?"**

(*Lamartine, Historie de la Turquie, Paris 1854, Vol. II pp. 276-277*)

CHAPTER FIVE

A PERPETUAL LEGACY TO THE WORLD

MORE THAN HONEST

An honest man, as the saying goes, is the noblest work of God. Muhammed was more than honest. He was human to the marrow of his bones. Human sympathy, human love was the music of his soul. To serve man, to elevate man, to purify man, to educate man, in a word, to humanise man — this was the object of his mission, the be-all and end-all of his life. In thought, in word, in action he had the good of humanity as his sole inspiration, his sole guiding principle.

He was most unostentatious and selfless to the core. What were the titles he assumed? Only two, Servant of God, and His Messenger; Servant first and then a Messenger. A Messenger, and Prophet like many other prophets in every part of this world, some known to us and many not known. If one does not believe in any of these truths one ceases to be a Muslim. It is an article of faith; with all Muslims.

"Looking at the circumstances of the time and the unbounded reverence of his followers", says a Western writer, **"the most miraculous thing about Muhammed is that he never claimed the power of working miracles".** Miracles were performed but not to propagate his faith and were attributed entirely to God and His inscrutable ways. He would plainly say that he was a man like others. He had no treasures of earth or heaven. Nor did he claim to know the secrets that lie in the womb of future. All this was in an age when miracles were supposed to be ordinary occurrences, at the beck and call of the commonest saint and when the

whole atmosphere was surcharged with super-naturalism in Arabia and outside Arabia.

SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION — LEGACY FROM MUḤUMMED (P.B.U.H.)

He turned the attention of his followers towards the study of nature and its laws, to understand them and appreciate the Glory of God. The Qur'an says:

WE (GOD ALMIGHTY) DID NOT CREATE

THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH,

AND ALL BETWEEN THEM MERELY IN (IDLE) SPORT:[1]

WE CREATED THEM NOT EXCEPT FOR JUST ENDS:

BUT MOST OF MANKIND DO NOT UNDERSTAND

(*HOLY QUR'AN 44:38-39*)

The world is not an illusion, nor without purpose. It has been created with truth. The number of verses in the Qur'an inviting close observation of nature and several times more than those that relate to prayer, fast, pilgrimage, etc., all put together. The Muslims under its influence began to observe nature closely and this gave birth to the scientific spirit of observation and experiments which was unknown to the Greeks. While the Muslim Botanist, Ibn Baitar wrote on Botany after collecting plants from all

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1. All creation is for a wise and just purpose. But men usually do not realise or understand it, because they are steeped in their own ignorance, folly or passions.

parts of the world, described by Mayer in his *Gesch der Botanika* as a monument of industry, while Al Biruni travelled for forty years to collect mineralogical specimens, and Muslim astronomers made some observations extending even over twelve years. Aristotle wrote on Physics without performing a single expertiment, wrote on natural history carelessly stating without taking the trouble to ascertain the most easily verifiable fact that men have more teeth than animal.

DEBT OF WEST TO ARABS FOR SCIENCE

Galen, the greatest authority on classical anatomy, informed that the lower jaw consists of two bones, a statement which is accepted unchallenged for centuries till Abdul Latheef takes the trouble to examine a human skeleton. After enumerating several instances, *Robert Briffalut* concludes in his well known book, *The Making of humanity:* **"The debt of our science to the Arabs does not consist in startling discoveries or revolutionary theories. Science owes a great deal more to the Arab culture: it owes its existence".** The same writer says: **"The Greeks systematised, generalised and theorised but the patient ways to investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation, experimental enquiry, were altogether alien to Greek temperament. What we call science arose in Europe as a result of new methods of investigations, of the method of experiment, observation, measurement, of the development of mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks......That spirit and these methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs."**

CHAPTER SIX

Muḥammed (P.B.U.H.) THE MESSENGER OF GOD

ISLAM — A COMPLETE WAY OF LIFE

It is the same practical character of the teaching of Prophet Muhammed that gave birth to the scientific spirit, that has also sanctified the daily labours and the so-called mundane affairs. The Qur'an says that God has created man to worship him but the word worship has a connotation of its own. God's worship is not confined to prayer alone, but every act that is done with the purpose of winning the approval of God and is for the benefit of humanity comes under its purview. Islam sanctifies life and all its pursuits provided they are performed with honesty, justice and pure intents. It obliterates the age-long distinction between sacred and profane. The Qur'an says if you eat clean things and thank God for it, it is an act of worship. It is a saying of the Prophet of Islam that morsel of food that one places in the mouth of his wife is an act of virtue to be rewarded by God. Another tradition of the Prophet says: **"HE WHO IS SATISFYING THE DESIRE OF HIS HEART WILL BE REWARDED BY GOD PROVIDED THE METHODS ADOPTED ARE PERMISSIBLE."** A person who was listening to him exclaimed, **"O PROPHET OF GOD, HE IS ANSWERING THE CALLS OF PASSIONS, HE IS ONLY SATISFYING THE CRAVINGS OF HIS HEART."** Forthwith came the reply: **"HAD HE ADOPTED THE UNLAWFUL METHOD FOR THE SATISFACTION OF THIS URGE, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN PUNISHED; THEN, WHY SHOULD HE NOT BE REWARDED FOR FOLLOWING THE RIGHT COURSE?"**

SUBLIME TEACHINGS

This new conception of religion that it should also devote itself to the betterment of this life rather than concern itself exclusively with supermundane affairs, has led to a new orientation of moral values. Its abiding influence on the common relations of mankind in the affairs of everyday life, its deep power over the masses, its regulation of their conceptions of rights and duty, its suitability and adaptability to the ignorant savage and the wise philosopher alike are characteristic features of the teachings of the Prophet of Islam.

BASED ON CORRECT FAITH AND RIGHT ACTIONS

But it should be most carefully borne in mind that his stress on good actions is not at the sacrifice of correctness of faith. While there are various schools of thought, one praising faith at the expense of deeds, another exhorting various acts to the detriment of correct belief, **Islam is based on correct faith and actions.** Means are as important as end and ends are as important as the means. It is an organic unity. Together they live and thrive. Separate them and they both decay and die. In Islam, faith cannot be divorced from action. Right knowledge should be transferred into right action to produce that right results: **"THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND DO GOOD, THEY ALONE SHALL ENTER PARADISE."** How often these words come in the Qur'an? Again and again, not less than fifty times these words are repeated. Contemplation is encouraged, but mere contemplation is not the goal. **THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND DO NOTHING CANNOT EXIST IN ISLAM.** Those who believe and do wrong are inconceivable. Divine law is the law of effort and not of ideals. It chalks out for the men the path of eternal progress from knowledge to action and from action to satisfaction.

GOD — THERE IS NONE LIKE UNTO HIM [1]

But what is the correct faith from which right action spontaneously proceeds, resulting in complete satisfaction? Here the central doctrine of Islam is the Unity of God. There is no God but one God, is the pivot from which hangs the whole teaching and practice of Islam. He is unique not only as regards His divine being but also as regards His divine attributes.

As regards the attributes of God, Islam adopts here as in other things too, the law of the golden mean. It avoids, on the one hand, the view of God which divests the divine being of every attribute and rejects on the other, the view which likens Him to things material. The Qur'an says, on the one hand, there is nothing which is like Him; on the other, it affirm that He is Seeing, Hearing, Knowing. He is the King who is without a stain of fault or deficiency, the mighty ship of His power floats upon the ocean of justice and equity. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is the Guardian over all. Islam does not stop with this positive statement. It adds further which is its most special characteristic, the negative aspect of the problem. There is alone no one else who is guardian over anything. He is the mender of every breakage, and no one else is the mender of any breakage. He is the restorer of any loss whatsoever. There is no god but one God, above any need, the Maker of bodies, Creater of souls, the Lord of the day of judgement and in short, in the words of Qur'an,

SAY: "CALL UPON ALLAH,
OR CALL UPON RAHMAN: [2]

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1. Holy Qur'an 112:4.

2. One of the 99 names (attributes) of God in the Holy Qur'an.

BY WHATEVER NAME YE CALL HIM, (IT IS WELL): FOR TO HIM BELONG THE MOST BEAUTIFUL NAMES.

(*Holy Qur'an 17:110*)

POSITION OF HUMAN BEINGS IN CREATION

Regarding the position of man in relation to the Universe, the Qur'an says:

ALLAH IS HE WHO HAS
SUBJECTED TO YOU THE SEA,
THAT YOU MAY SAIL YOUR SHIPS THROUGH IT BY HIS COMMAND,
THAT YE MAY SEEK OF HIS BOUNTY
AND THAT YE MAY BE GRATEFUL
AND HE HAS SUBJECTED TO YOU,
ALL THAT IS IN THE HEAVENS
AND ON EARTH AS FROM HIMSELF:
BEHOLD, IN THAT ARE SIGNS INDEED
FOR A PEOPLE WHO REFLECT.

(Holy Qur'an 45 : 12-13)

But in relation to God, the Qur'an says:

HE (ALLAH) IT IS WHO HATH CREATED DEATH [1] AND LIFE,

THAT HE MAY TEST AS TO WHICH OF YOU IS BEST IN DEEDS:

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1. **"Created Death and Life."** Death is here put before life, and is created. Death is therefore not merely a negative state.

AND IT IS HE WHO IS EXALTED IN MIGHT, OFT-FOR- GIVING;-

(Holy Qur'an 67 : 2)

Inspite of free-will which he enjoys to some extent, every man is born under certain circumstances and continues to live under certain circumstances beyond his control. With regard to this, God says according to Islam, it is My will to create any man under conditions that seem best to Me. Cosmic plans, finite mortals cannot fully comprehend. But I will certainly test you in prosperity as well as in adversity, in health as well as in sickness, in heights as well as in depths. My ways of testing differ from man to man, from hour to hour. In adversity do not despair and do not resort to unlawful means. It is but a passing phase. In prosperity do not forget God. God's Gifts are given only as trust. You are always on trial; every moment on test. In this sphere of life, **"their's is not to reason why, their's is but to do and die."** If you live, live in accordance with God; and if you die, in the path of God. You may call it fatalism. But this type of fatalism is a condition of vigorous increasing effort, keeping you ever on the alert. Do not consider this temporal life on earth as the end of human existence. **There is a life after death and it is eternal.** Life after death is only a connecting link, a door that opens up hidden reality of life. Every action in life, however insignificant, produces a lasting effect. It is correctly recorded somehow.

THIS LIFE IS PREPARATION FOR HEREAFTER

Some of the ways of God are known to you, but many of His ways are hidden from you. What is hidden in you and

from you in this world will be unrolled and laid open before you in the next. The virtuous will enjoy the blessings of God which the eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor have they entered into the hearts of men to conceive of them. They will march onward reaching higher and higher stages of evolution. Those who have wasted opportunity in this life shall under the inevitable law, which makes every man taste of what he has done, be subjected to a course of treatment of the spiritual disease which they have brought about with their own hands. Beware, it is a terrible ordeal. Bodily pain is torture, you can bear it somehow. Spiritual pain is hell, you will find it unbearable. Fight in this life itself the tendencies of the spirit prone to evil, tempting to lead you into iniquitous ways. Reach the next stage when the self-accusing spirit in your conscience is awakened and the soul is anxious to attain moral excellence and revolts against disobedience. This will lead you to the final stage of the soul at rest, contented with God, finding its happiness and delight in Him alone. The soul no more stumbles. The stage of struggle passes away. Truth is victorious and falsehood lays down its arms. All complexes will then be resolved. Your house will not be divided against itself. Your personality will get integrated round the central core of submission to the will of God and complete surrender to His divine purpose. All hidden energies will then be released. The soul then will have peace. God will then address you, **"O THOU SOUL THAT ART AT REST, AND RESTEST FULLY CONTENTED WITH THY LORD, RETURN TO THY LORD, HE IS PLEASED WITH THEE AND THOU BE PLEASED WITH HIM; SO ENTER AMONG MY SERVANTS AND ENTER INTO MY PARADISE."**

MAN'S DESTINY

This is the final goal for man; to become on the one hand the master of the Universe and on the other to see that his soul finds rest in his Lord, that not only his Lord will be pleased with him but that he is also pleased with his Lord. Contentment, complete contentment, satisfaction, complete satisfaction, peace, complete peace will result. The love of God is his food at this stage and he drinks deep at the fountain of life. Sorrow and frustration do not overwhelm him and success does not find him vain and exulting.

Thomas Carlyle, struck by this philosophy of life writes: **"AND THEN ALSO ISLAM — THAT WE MUST SUBMIT TO GOD; THAT OUR WHOLE STRENGTH LIES IN RESIGNED SUBMISSION TO HIM, WHATSOEVER HE DOES TO US, THE THING HE SENDS TO US, EVEN IF DEATH AND WORSE THAN DEATH, SHALL BE GOOD, SHALL BE BEST; WE RESIGN OURSELVES TO GOD."** The same author continues, **"IF THIS BE ISLAM"**, says *Goethe,* **"DO WE NOT ALL LIVE IN ISLAM?"**. *Carlyle* himself answers this question of *Goethe,* **"YES, ALL OF US THAT HAVE ANY MORAL LIFE, WE ALL LIVE SO. THIS IS YET THE HIGHEST WISDOM THAT HEAVEN HAS REVEALED TO OUR EARTH."**

Carlyle continues, **"THE WORD OF SUCH A MAN (MUHAMMED), IS A VOICE DIRECT FROM NATURE'S OWN HEART; MEN DO AND MUST LISTEN TO THAT, AS TO NOTHING ELSE; ALL ELSE IS WIND IN COMPARISON...."**

From the book — "*Heroes and Hero-Worship*".

Non-Muslim Verdict ON MUHUMMED AND THE QUR'-AN★

1 " '**I believe in one God, and Mahomet, the Apostle of God,**'is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol: the honours of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue: and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion."
[*Edward Gibbon and Simon Ockley, History of the Saracen Empire, London 1870, p. 54.*]

2 "Muhammad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him."
[*Diwan Chand Sharma, The Prophets of the E ast, Calcutta 1935, p. 122.*]

3 "Four years after the death of Justinian, A.D. 569, was born at Mecca, in Arabia the man who, of all men exercised the **greatest** influence upon the human race...Mohammed..."
[*John Willian Draper, M.D., LL.D., A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe, London 1875, Vol. 1, pp. 329-330*]

4 "I doubt whether any man whose external conditions changed so much ever changed himself less to meet them."
[*R.V.C. Bodley, The Messenger, London 1946, p. 9.*]

5 "That his (Muhammad's) reforms enhanced the status of women in general is universally admitted."
[*H.A.R. Gibb, Mohammedanism, London 1953, p. 33.*]

6 "In little more than a year he was actually the spiritual, nominal and temporal ruler of Medina, with his hands on the lever that was to shake the world."
[*John Austin, "Muhammad the Prophet of Allah," in T.P.'s and Cassel's Weekly for 24th September 1927.*]

★ **QUR'-AN:** is the closest approximation to the Arabic title of the Holy Book of God, despite the numerous variant spellings by Western writers in the quotations that follow.

7 "Next to the Bible[1] it (Quran) is the most esteemed and most powerful religious book in the world."
[*J. Christy Wilson, Introducing Islam, New York 1950, p. 30.*]

8 "It is more read than any other book in the world. The Christian Bible may be a world best-seller, but nearly 250 million[2] followers of the Prophet Mohammed read or recite long sections of Alcoran *five times a day,* every day of their lives, from the time they can talk."
[*Charles Francis Potter. The Faiths Men Live By, Kingswood, Surrey 1955, p. 81.*]

9 "The Koran is the Mohammedan Bible, and is more reverenced than any other sacred book, more than the Jewish Old Testament or the Christian New Testamen t."
[*J. Shillidy, D.D., The Lord Jesus in the Koran, Surat, 1913. p. 111.*]

10 "Well then, if the Koran were his own composition other men could rival it. Let them produce ten verses like it. If they could not (and it is obvious that they could not), then let them accept the Koran as an outstanding evidential miracle."
[*H.A.R. Gibb, Mohammedanism, London 1953. p. 33.*]

11 "So there has been no opportunity for any forgery or pious fraud in the Koran, which distinguishes it from almost all other important religious works of ancient times....It is exceedingly strange that this illiterate person should have composed the best book in the language."
[*Basanta Coomar Bose, Mohamedanism, Calcutta 1931, p. 4.*]

12 "The picture of the Muslim soldier advancing with a sword in one hand and the Koran in the other is quite false."
[*A.S. Tritton, Islam, London 1951, p. 21.*]

13 "History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated."
[*De Lacy O'Leary, Islam at the Crossroads, London 1923, p. 8.*]

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1. Comming from a Christian critic of Islam we will not take exception to this **"SECOND PLACE"**.

2. Latest estimate is a thousand million Muslims.